AN ESSAY,

UPON

The Inscription

OF

MACDUFF'S CROSSE

In

FYFE.

By

I. C.

1678.

Veterrima quaque ut ea vina quæ vetustatem ferunt esse debent suavissima: Cicer. *de Amicitia.*

Edinburgh, Printed by the Heir of *Andrew Anderson*, Printer to the King's most Excellent Majesty. 1678.

Antiquius quo quid eſt, hoc venerabilius.

The INSCRIPTION UPON MACDUFFS CROSS, Which ſtands above the *NEWBURGH*, near *LUNDORES*, upon the Confines of *STRATHERNE* and *FYFE*.

Maldȝaradȝum dȝagos Malairia largia largos
Spalando ſpados ſive nig ſig knippite gnaros
Loȝea lauriſcos lauringen louria luſcos
Et Coluburtos ſic ſit tibi burſea burtus
Exitus et blaradȝum ſive lim ſive lam ſive labȝum
Propter macgidȝim et hoc oblatum
Accipe ſmeleridem ſuper limpide lampida labȝum.

THough I had this of an ingenious Gentleman, telling me he came by it from the Clerk of *Crail*, who informed, that ſeveral ſucceeding Clerks there, have, for a conſiderable time, engroſt this as a true Copy in their Books, to preſerve it from utter periſhing; for it is now quite worn off the ſtone, at leaſt altogether illegible. But be it ſo recorded in *Crail*, *Newburgh* or elſewhere, yet with their good favour, ſcarcely can I judge this a true and exact Copy; whether the fault has lyen in the firſt Copiator from the ſtone, or from the Engraver, or partly both: For, none who knows the Hiſtory of *Mackbeth*, *Malcom Canmore* and *Mackduff*, will, I hope ſuppoſe, that ſuch a King as *Malcom Canmore*, when he intended to witneſs a favour for *Mackduff*'s ſervices, and ſuch a ſubject as *Mackduff*, when he was willing to publiſh the royal Bounty of his Maſter, would upon the Croſs of ſo famous a Sanctuery (as this was) have inſcribed but non-ſenſe. And though the true meaning and purport of the words be dark and abſtruſe to us, who now

live at such a distance; yet I wonder why the learned *Skeen* should brand them as barbarous (I hope he only means unintelligible, and not nonsensical) For questionless they are (for what I have said) significative, and I doubt not but to purpose; and most probably they were written, either to signifie the Priviledges given by King *Malcolm* to *Mackduff*, with the benefits he enjoyed by virtue thereof, or the Immunities, Freedoms and Pardons indulged by, and conferred upon, that Girth, if not in a complicated sense, all of these together. So then, allowing them to signifie sense, which few men in a sober charity can well refuse; lets see (as far as we may) to what Language the words are best reducible, for to any single one they cannot: for, albeit the termination, flexion and construction I take to be most after the Latine, and that there be some Latine words intermixed, yet none will aver it all to be Latine; so to some other Language we must go, which is but one of two, Our old *High-land* or *Irish* tongue, or the *Saxon*: And as I hardly think it the *High-land* or *Irish*, as well, because I never heard that brought under *Roman* Terminations, Constructions, or Declinations; So even those that would wrest it to that Language in some words, cannot follow it out in all, although they be seen in the *Irish* Tongue. And it is strange, none of our *Highlanders*, tho Scholars ever interprets it; therefore I much rather incline to deduce it (at least most of it) from the *Saxon*, which I hope will not seem strange to the Intelligent when he remembers what footing the *Saxons* had in this Isle, and how *Malcome Canmore* was not onely long an Exile at an *English Saxon* Court, but that he had interest in *Northumberland*, *Cumberland*, and *Westmorland*, which was but sometimes a Province of the West *Saxons* And as there came 10000 *English Saxons* then in with *Sibardus* the Kings Grand-father, so they must be but Novices in our Language, who do not find *Vestiges* of the *Saxon* in it almost every where. Taking then this Inscription to be *Saxon* (as to the main) aped in a Latine dress, as to the main, I say, for suppose some words might savour of a *Danish*, or old *French* Extract, it needs not import, since both are of a Teutonick Origine, aped, I say, in a Latine dress, whither from the fancie of the Author, to make it to run the

smoother

ſmoother with the nterlaced Latine in this his hexametrall compoſure, or from ſome inclination of King *Malcome* himſelf, of whom and of whoſe time, ſayeth a grave Author, as now the Engliſh Court by reaſon of the abundance of Normands therein, became moſt to ſpeak French, ſo the Scotiſh Court, becauſe of the Queen and many Engliſh that came with her, began to ſpeak Engliſh, I underſtand the Engliſh Saxon, the which language it would ſeem, King *Malcome* himſelf had before that learned, and now by reaſon of his Queen, did the more affect it; thus far he, where if I might be allowed a conjecture, perhaps this Sanctuary was granted at that pious Queens intreaty, and here inſcribed with her native tongue for her greater honour, and the rather under a Latine Vizorn, to invite the Scots (of no language more ſtudious then Latine) to ſome love and knowledge of the Saxon. And ſo let us now with allowance, to rectifie what Eſcapes may be in the Orthography, modeſtly examine the Words themſelves; but leſt I be thought to be too peremptory to impoſe my naked Conjectures, in a matter of ſuch Antiquity, I ſhall bring my Vouchers where I have them, with the probable Motives that prevail with me to ſuch a ſenſe, ſtill leaving a juſt Liberty to all who can find out better.

Firſt then (as the words ly in order) I take Maldaradum to be a ſuppoſititious Genitive, in the plural number after the Greek way, from *Maldra*, *Maldrus*, the German *Maldar*, *pro modio ſeu certa menſura frumentaria*; and *Spelman* ſayes, *Maldri vocabulum eſt Alemanicum*; and have we not to this day with us the Word *Melder* and a Melder of corn, and this Genitive *Maldaradarum* I conſtrue with Dragos, conjoined with its Latine adjective *Largos*, and this *Dragos* I ſupoſe denizon'd a Roman from Drach or Drache of the Greek δραγμα *manipulus* δρασσω *prehendo, manu arripio*, *Fut.* 2. δραγω, from which belike we have the words *Draught* (as applyed to Cups and Fiſh-netts) *drag*, *draw*, ſo that largos, Dragos, maldaradum, may ſignifie large quantities or meaſures of Corn, to be taken by ſome compulſive or diſtreinziable Force, as will I hope anon be found agreeable with the reſt of the Sentence.

Malairia

Balairia, I fancie here by wrong Orthography miſ-written for mairia, *Officium Majoris*, *Majoratus*, *Præfectura*, ſayes *Spelman*, (ſufficiently known in the Burrowes Royal:) And does not our *Skeen* in his 15. Chap. of the Statutes of *Alexander* the Second, call the Earl of *Fyfe*, *Marus Regis Comitatus de Fyfe*, (whereof more anon) *Mairia*, I take to be in the Ablative Caſe, for we muſt not here be tyed to the ſtrict Rules of Metrical Quantities, or Grammatical Conſtructions.

Largia, miſ-written I ſuppoſe for Lagslita, or Laghslita, by inadvertency or tranſpoſing of the *Saxon Letters*; yea, and the Saxons ſometimes in their Capitals, plac'd Letters within Letters, and were ſomewhat odd in their Contractions and Abbreviations, eſpecially in Monumental Inſcriptions; *Lagſlita*, *Tranſgreſſio Legis*, *Legis violatæ pœna, proprie ruptio legis, ſeu multa pro tranſgreſſione legis*, Lay & Lagh, *Lex*, & Slit, *rupta, Vox Danica, & in Anglo-Danorum Legibus primum deprehenſa*, ſayes *Spelman*; But what needs me cite *Spelman*, have we not the Phraſe, *ilk land has its Laugh*, and is not the word *Slit*, as obvious as beneficial to every Taylor: *Lagſlita*, I take to be in the Accuſative Caſe, which muſt be ſupplied with the Prepoſition *propter*, and yet for all this the ſentence is but mank without the help of a Verbe, which muſt be borrowed in knippite, written belike for knighthite, by placing the Roman p for the Saxon th, which yet may be excuſed; ſince *Spelman* finds that fault in the Tranſcriber of *Canutus* Laws, upon the word Thegen or Pegen. *Knighthite* then, or *Knippite*, being a ſuppoſititious Verb, (for I know not the Saxon Conſtructions or Conjugations) after the Latine form, from the Saxon knight, or knyt, ſignifying *famulus miniſter*, may import as much as, Receive ye as my Servant or Deputie, and being joyned with *Mairia*, as my Lieutenant, (for ſo is yet a *Maire* within Burgh) ſo that *famulus miniſter* in this word here muſt be honourable, and κατ'ἐξοχην, as it is in Theini, Theigni, Thani, who from Thien *to ſerve*, were but *famuli miniſtri*, and yet were thoſe *famuli Regni Barones*, as *Spelman* notes. And thus the ſentence may be expounded, Receive for your Service

as

as my Lieutenant, and through and by virtue of your Office of Lieutenantry, uplift and distreinzy large quantities and measures of Corn, for the Transgressions and Breach of the Laws, and why then should *Skeen* terme that Barbarous, who himself homologats the same sense in another Language, in that his above-cited Chapter of King *Alexander* the second, Intituled, *De Forisfacturis levandis ab illis qui remanent ab Exercitu*, where in the marginal Glos upon the 4. Para. speaking of the Earl of *Fyfe*, his words are, *Et ille non sicut Comes, sed sicut Marus Regis Comitatus de Fyfe, ad rectitudines suas exigendas*: and does he not again, in his *De Verborum significatione*, in the word *Clanmackduff*, say out of *Boetius*, that amongst other Priviledges, *Mackduff* and his Clan had the Priviledge and Right of a Regality; yea and does not the learned *Spelman* say, what was Gildwite to the English Saxons. was Laghslite to the Danes, and and both *forisfactura* to the Normans, (*amerciaments* with us) where may be noticed the judicious exactness of the composer, in his prefixing the general word Laghslita, to be amerciat by victual or corn; For *Laghslitæ*, sayes one, *annumerandæ sunt mediis & levioribus delictis, quorum mulctæ pietatis intuitu, & per misericordiam imponuntur. Nec graviora crimina*, sayes another, *inter Laghslitas simplices numerata aut levia, quaque instar graviorum mulctata quisquam opinabitur.* And so how methodically does here our old verificator proceed to faults and crimes of greater guilt, and more special denomination, yet for a while still under the Conduct of *Knippite*.

Sive gnaros spalando spados, I conjecture to signifie, whether such as are known cunning, or accustomed to want, or put away their Weapons of Warfare: the two first words being Latine, I hope will not be refused; the construction of *spalando*, I take to be a Gerund for an Infinitive, *gnaros spalare* a counterfeit Conjugation, from an old French word, espaler to scatter, cast away, or spread abroad. Spados from espade or espadon, in the same language, a sword, and by a Metonymy, for any weapon. Neither needs it be strange that these Words are borrowed from the old French, which did depend upon the Teutonick and high German, as the modern does now more upon the

the Latine; and that wanting and away putting of weapons of warfare were with us reputed Crimes, and punished as such, see *Skeen* himself, in the 27 chap. of the first statutes of King *Robert* the *Bruce*, *de armaturis pro guerra & pœna eorum quo eas non habent*; Which is there laid to be forfaulture, or escheate of all his goods, and in the last chap. of the same Statutes, entituled, *Non licet trendere arma hostibus Regni*: The punishment is loss of Life, and Limb, and all they can tyne to the King, which must be Goods. And it were but frivolous to alledge that these Statutes are long after the upsetting of *Macduffs crosse*: For, how many things are punishable by the Common Law and practick of the Kingdom, before they become *Statutorie*: And does not their coming under a Statute, imply a prior Custom? Yea, and who knows, but that after such a catastrophe as was at, and before, the *Bruces* coming to the Crown, they might be rather but revived, then original. And have not our subsequent Laws for Weapon-shawings been founded upon thir Customs, to prevent such inconveniences for the future?

Give nig, And here we must return again to the *Saxon*, nig, For nighwite, the Syllable *Wite*, *mulcta pœna*, being left out, which is some time ordinarie (our Ancestors delighting much in Monosyllables) and the rather allowable in this Metrical composure, nig or nigh contracted from nithing, Nidling or niderling; such as stay away from the host; For, sayes not *Malmesberiensis*, *Jubet* (*scilicet Rex*) *ut compatriotas advocent ad obsidionem venire, nisi siqui velint sub nomine* Niderling, *quod nequam sonat remanere*, Angli *qui nihil miserius putarent quam hujusce vocabuli dedecore aduri catervatim ad Regem, confluunt & invincibilem exercitum faciunt*. And sayes not *Matthew Paris*, *Ut ad obsidionem ventant jubet nisi velint sub nomine* Nithing, *recenseri*. Angli *qui nihil contumeliosius & vilius estimant, quam hujusmodi ignominioso vocabulo &c.* And does not *Spelman* deduce *Nidling*, *à vocabulis* Anglo Normanicis, Nid, *id est, nidus &* Ling *pullus, ac si ignavi isti homines, qui in exercitum proficisci nolunt pullorum instar essent, qui de nido non audeant prodire domi latitantes & torpescentes.* And have we not the above-cited 15 chap. of our *Alexander* the second, entituled, *De foris facturis levandis ab illis qui remanent ab exercitu*

ercitu Regis, Where the Earle of *Fyfes* priviledge is expreſly reſerved to him, *qua marus Regis ad rectitudines ſuas exigendas*; And wh t be the pains and puniſhments of ſuch as ſtay from, or deſert the Kings Hoſt, are they not ſufficiently known, and freſhly remembred by us to this day?

Fig for **Figwi e, Figwita**, or **Fyghtwita**, the mulct of ſuch as by fighting raiſes a fray, trouble, or diſturbance in the Hoſt, or perhaps more generally, *mulcta Rixarum cum verberibus, vel ipſæ pugnæ* and *Ranulphus Ciſtrenſis* calls *Fybtwite, amerciamentum pro conflictu*, And have we not a ſevere certification in a ſubſequent ſtatute againſt ſuch a raiſes a fray in the Hoſt, 54 Act, 12. Par. Ja 2d. And is not the word **Fight** y. t plain with us?

Lowea by wrong Orthographie, *pro* **Lothea** (I ſuppoſe) from the Saxon **Hloth, Hlode**, the Saxon aſpiration being left out in the tranſcribing as is ordinary, the Saxons having a peculiar way of fixing aſpirations on their conſo nants, by ingroſſing them with the ſame fig re, as the *Greeks* in their φ. χ. θ. and the R. here written for Th, the *Saxon* figure of both being apt to impoſe one for an other, if not narrowly noticed: *Qui de* Hloth *fuerat accuſatus abneget per centum viginti Hidas, & ſic emendet: hoc eſt*, ſayes Spelman, *qui turmæ illegitimæ interfuiſſe arguitur, &c.* And *Hlothbota, mulcta ejus eſt qui turmæ illegitimæ interfuerit*, *Bote* Saxonicum, *compenſatio emendatio*; And have we not a phraſe in ſome places, *they clod together*, from the *Saxon* **Hlod**, *turma*, and how far unlawful meetings and convocations of the Leiges have been, and yet ſtill are troubleſome to this Kingdom, th ſe that run may read: And if this word be rightly deduced, it ſeems, our forefathers have very prudently here placed it among the thick of the Cryms, which makes me the rather admire, why ſo much noiſe hath in this our Age been made for ſuppreſſing them, as if unlawfull meetings had never been thought a Cryme with us, till of late. I know ſome may incline to deduce this word from **Lot**, of the *Saxon* **Hlot**, *ſors, pars tributi ſive ſolutionis alicujus quam inter alios quis tenetur præſtare*, ſayes *Spelman*; So that ſuch would make the meaning here to be a gift or ſ. render of all Unlaws or Eſcheats belonging to the King, and in that ſo often

cited 15 chap. of the Statutes of *Alexander* the second, in the 5 parag, some ground may be there for such a conjecture from *de Cavellis vero, &c.* And some such priviledge is yet granted to the house of *Argyle*, in point of escheats (or unlaws for Crymes) which yet here I conceive sufficiently included in knigthwhite, mairia, and therefore likes best of the first exposition of the special Cryme of unlawfull Convocations, with liberty to the candid Reader to choose as he pleases.

Lauriscos, I suppose should be read Leudiscos, from leudis, leodis & leudum, *quæ verba dicuntur pro* Wergildo, *de capitis estimatione leudi occisi, scilicet de compositione quam aliter* Weram & Wergildum, *vocan.* Leudis, *vasallus, cliens, homo ligius, subditus:* So *leudiscos* may signifie the amerciaments which were then due to the King by and attour the *Kinbote*) for killing of a free Leidge. And that it was the custome among the *Northern* Nations, rather to amerciat then to take bloud for bloud, Hear *Tacitus*, *Germani vetcres & Aquilonares gentes, qui jugum pariter & leges omni Europæ imposuere gravissima delicta ipsaque homicidia pecuniis commutabant*: And another saying, *Pœnarum enim ratio apud mediorum Sæculorum homines in mulctis, potius quam in sanguine sita fuit.*

For lauringem, I willingly would read laricingin, Robbrie and theft, for thus with the n it is in the plural number from *Laricinium*, the French *Larrecin*, and both belike from the Latine *Latrocinium*, where sayes *Spelman*, *Prisca Anglorum lex Larricinium divisit in majus & minus*, the one with violence and force, the other without, the one in things of greater moment, the others of less: Hence the legal tearm *Petit larcens*, yet in use with the English.

Lauria, I would read lairia, for lairwite layrwit, or leirwite, *Stupri seu concubitus illegitimi mulcta in adulteros, fornicatores, virginumque corruptores animadversio* (belike in thir lines a rape, as they are expounded relative to the *Girth*) from the *Saxon* lagan, *concumbere* legar, *concubitor, &* wite, *quasi concubitoris mulcta.* And sayes not clearly *Spelman*, *Ad maneriorum dominos (nescio an ad omnes ex consuetudine) olim pertinuit jurisdictio de nativis suis (id est servis & ancillis) corruptis cognoscendi multamque delinquentibus, tam viris quam fœminis*

inferendi

inferendi ad quosdam etiam non de his solum, sed & de aliis quibuscunque intra dominium ipsorum sic peccantibus, and have we not yet the word *Laire* in Childbed· *Laire* and others.

Luscos, I do not here take to be the Latine *Luscus*, but that the word should be rather written, **liscos**, for, or from **Fliscos**, the letter **F**, being left out to make the line run the closer upon the letter **L**. **Fliscos**, *Fugitivos*, *Fugitives*, the words *Flee*, *Flight*, and *Flisk*, sufficiently known, as to flisk up and down here and there, as *Fugitives* use to do, who dare not well stay long in one place, all from, or in great affinitie with *Leipa*, *Si quis à Domino suo sine licentia discedat, ut Leipa emendetur*, which *Spelman* understands, *de profugo*.

Et Coloburtos, I read, **Coloburtos**, or yet rather **Colovortos**, or **Colovertos**: But like the Vowel *u*, is written in the third Syllable, to clinch the better by *Bur*, with the last word of the line: And every *Bajane* knows the affinitive betwixt the letters, B. and U. The signification however I take to be runawayes, such as run away from their colours, and *Culvertagium*, I find a reproachful tearm of Cowardice, which *Spelman* thinks to come from *Culvert* a Dove, *à columbina timiditate*, perhaps (as well, if not better) from *vertere colobium*: sure I am, we have the word Turn-coat, allusive to its sense; and may not our disdainful word *Collie* derive its pedegree hence?

Sic sit tibi bursea burtus, and so through the amerciaments and unlaws of the above written Crymes, your purse shall be heavy, that is, your gains and advantage the greater, **Bursea** for **Bursa**, and is not the word **Burthen**, of known signification to the meanest? And thir abovewritten words would I rather, at least more especially expound with a relation to the Regalitie, and its Priviledges, in favours of the Earle, yet not excluding some benefits of a Sanctuary to the transgressours (upon a composition) as the Reader at his pleasure may best incline to. But for my own part (with a just deference to better judgements) as I should attribute the preceeding lines, rather to the Regalitie, so should I give the subsequent more to the Sanctuary.

Exitus et Blaradrum, would I read **exitus et bladadrum**, a genetive, as *Maldraradrum*, from blade a weapon by which a mortal wound is or may be inflicted: Hence with us *Blade*, a sword, or sharp edged

 weapon,

weapon, and with the Countreymen, to give a *Blad, blaw*, or after the *English* dialect, a *blow*, all (it would seem) from the *Greek* Βλαπτω, *Ledo*. And does not *Spelman* say, That the *Saxons* in their Language agreed with, and followed much more the *Græcians*, then the *Romans*.

Sive lim, whether on a limb, Sive lam, *id est*, Lath, Lith, fra Lit, the vowel i, commuted for a, and the letter m, for t, or th, It being usual for the Poets then, who were the Priests, to run much upon a letter; and is it not given for a rule, *literæ ejusdem ordinis & organi inter se sunt permutabiles*; And here Th, being *consonans aspirata*, is not so intirely and depress'dly a *Mute*, but that it may be changed for a *liquid* in a *Saxon* Poem. Limb, *membrum cum esse* Lith, *articulus cum nervis*. And is not *Lath* used for what is plyable by, with, or on some ligament.

Labium, I take here to signifie *life*, by some *Catechresis* of the Author, alluisive to the phrase, *Our life is in our lip*.

Propter magidrim, I would write, magidrim, *Familias cognationis, seu cognatorum*, from the *Saxon* mæg, *Cognatus*, sayes *Spelman*, the diphthong being abreviated to the vowel, (as is ordinary in the transcribing or compounds of that Language) mag, mage, or maghe, a kinman, or Cousin: whence we use the word mæth, for *affinis* to this hour and hired, hide, or hider, which *Verstegan* interprets a Linage, a Family, hidrim, in the plural number: The *Saxons* making that by adding n, as we do now s, and leaving out the aspiration in the composition: Does not thus *Magidrin* better quadrat and agree with the priviledge *Skeen* gives by that *Girth*, to the *Clanmack-duffe*, then to take *propter* for *prope*, as some would, and *Magidrim* for *Mugdrim*, because forsooth, the cross stands upon, or near a place of that name: But allowing their conjecture, what sense or cohæsion can they make from this, their *prope mugdrim*? Yet a little to convince them, Dare they not rather think, their *mugdrim* bears that name from this *magidrin*, in the lines, and imports as much, as the land, or place lying beside, or about the cross, of the kindred. And seing there are yet the *vestiges* of some old buildings at *mugdrim*, Would it be any Heresie to think, that sometimes dwelt there an Overseer, to notice such as came to, and claimed the benefit of, the Sanctuarie? which *Skeen* sayes, was such to

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the Kindred of *Mackduff*, that when any Manslayer, being within the ninth degree of kin and bloud to *Mackduffe*, came to that cross, and gave nine Kye and a Colpindach, he was free of the slaughter committed by him. And thus hath our learned *Skeen* made us understand, *hoc oblatum*.

Accipe smeleridem, And for your Oblation, Receive an Oblivion, an Indemnitie, a Pardon; whence belike we yet have the word smeire, smeare, smore, as if a thing so covered over, by consequence may be presumed to be forgotten, or *smeleris, smeleridis*, (after the *Greek* way, as from *Spelman*, I have said, was but ordinarie with the *Saxons*) *Quasi abstersio, detersio. purgatio*, form σμεω σμαω, *abstergo, detergo, purgo*. I know some would have *smeleridem*, to signifie a kiss, from *smeirikin*, a word so used in some places: but sure, our *Smeleridem* here must import more otherwayes, *Alas!* this priviledge would prove to the man-slayer, but as in the proverb, *A kiss and a drink of cold water*: But because the conjecture came (as I heard) from a man of reverence and reading, let me ingross it thus, For this your offering or gift (to wit, of the kye) and by kissing of the Cross, receive ye an Oblivion.

Super limpide lampida labrum, sufficiently explained already, only I could have wisht they had come to my hand under a more Saxon Garb: limthite lamthita, the Saxon th, in the transcribing being often turned to b, d, or p, whether from the ignorance of the Saxon Character, or *Euphoniæ gratia*, for good companies sake of the Words with which they are conjoyned: And that I had reason to reduce most of these Words to the Saxon, I now (from what I have said) referr to the Courteous Reader, and hope I shall not be judged unreasonable to think these Lines, as I got them, might be miswritten in their Orthography, whether from the misunderstanding of the Saxon Character, if they were so ingraved, or (after so many Centuries) even of any other in which it might have been cut, since none who knows any thing, but knows it wants not its own difficulty to read but the Characters of an Age or two from our selves, be they written in Parchment, or ingraven in Brass or Stone: as for instance, I shall not stick to say they be no small Clerks, whom I could hold upon a Wager, would they go to St. *Andrews*, they should hardly at the first View, read me distinctly, with one Breath, the Inscription,

ſcription of Biſhop *Kennedies* Tomb, in the Chappel of St. *Salvators* Colledge, though he died but in the Year, 1466. And ſeing I have heard ſeveral Copies and various Readings of theſe Lines (ſhould I rather ſay of the Inſcription upon this Croſs) all differing amongſt themſelves, why may not I (ſeeing *Skeen*, of the two laſt which being moſt ſtuffe with Latine, might be thought moſt legible, ſayes no more, then, that they appeared to be conform to that purpoſe) crave Leave to offer mine, which to the intelligent will not appear very diſſonant from the Coppy I have already here tranſcribed, and the leſs will the difference yet be, to any who knows the Saxon Character, yea, and what if in ſome Characters our Predeceſſours wrote not as the Engliſh? does not every Language have its Dialects differing ſometimes in whole Syllabications, as in the Lettering, Writing, and Pronunciation, (not to ſpeak of the Injuries of Weather in ſo long a Tract of time) ſo upon all Adventures, I willingly would rectifie and read my Copy thus,

Waldȝaradȝum dȝagos Wairia laghslita largos
Spalando ſpados ſive nig ſig knighthite gnaros
Lothea leudiſcos laricingen lairia liſcos
Et Colovurtos ſic ſit tibi burſia burtus
Eritus et bladadȝum ſive lim ſive lam ſive labȝum
Pȝopter magidȝin et hoc oblatum
Accipe ſmeleridem ſuper limthide lamthida labȝum.

And this my Reading with thir Orthographical Amendments, I ſubmit to the diſcretion of the judicious, allowing any to uſe either the Roman *p* or the Saxon *th*, in what words I have here altered as they think fit, or ſhall agree beſt with their Ear and Fancy; And having already been ſo full upon every Word, I hope a cloſs interpretation needs not be here expected, becauſe belike it may reliſh better, that (from what I have ſaid) every man be his own Interpreter. Yet not too much to burden the Memory of the Reader, may I briefly paraphraſe it; for a verbatim Expoſition here, as in all the old Tongues (and they ſay the Teutonick, whereof the Saxon is but a Branch, came with *Twiſco* from *Babel*) would ſound a little harſh, as well in reſpect of

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the idiotisms of the two languages, as that most of the Words are legal Terms, or relating thereto, and so will hardly allow a narrow and precise Exposition: and although the ground work be Saxon, yet appears it under a Latine Mask; therefore as I said, I crave pardon to Paraphrase it under one View thus,

"Ye Earl of *Fyfe*, receive for your Services, as my Lieute-
"tenant by Right of this Regality, large Measures of Victual
"or Corn, for the Transgressions of the Laws, as well from those
"as want or put away their Weapons of Warfare, as of such as stays
"away from, or refuses to come to the Host, or those that raises
"Frayes or Disturbances therein, or from such as keep, haunt,
"and frequent unlawful Convocations; together with all Amercia-
"ments due to me, for the slaughter of a free Leige, or for Rob-
"bery and Theft, or for Adultery and Fornication within your
"Bounds, with the Unlaws of Fugitives, and the Penalties due
"by such Cowards as deserts the Host, or runs away from their
"Collours; thus shall your Gains be the greater. And yet further,
"to witness my kindness, I remit to those of your own Kindred, all
"issues of Wounds, be it of Limb, Lith, or Life, in swa far as
"for this Offering (to wit, of nine Kyne and a Queyoch) they shall
"be indemnified for Limb, Lith, or Life.

And thus have I adventured to read and explain this Old Inscription, *quæ molta tenet anteiqua sepolta*; and which, with *Skeen*'s good Leave, I can no otherwise condemn for Barbarous, then that it is Saxon under a Latine Cover; where it would be remembred, that after the *Goths* and *Vandals* came into *Italy*, the Purity of the Roman Tongue was at a loss, untill somewhat revived in the last Centurie, and that the Poets about *Malcome Canmore*'s time, were ordinarily the Priests, and those of no great Reading, and for the most part no great and exact Linguists, or so neat and closs in their Poesie; as witness that Composition of the Carmelite Frier's upon the battel of *Bannockburn*, some hundreds of years after the setting up of this Cross: And as this was one of, if not the oldest Regality in this Countrey,

Countrey, ſo by the Priviledges hereby granted, it will to any underſtanding man appear to be very great; whence belike we have that common Phraſe, *The Kingdom of Fife*, (an Epithet given to no other Shire) as if *Mackduff* had enjoyed his Eſtate much after the way of *Hugh Lupus* (or more properly *de Abrincis*) in his Earldom of *Cheſter*, of whom it is ſaid, he enjoyed that Earldom from his Uncle the Conqueror, *Adeo libere ad gladium, ſicut ipſe Rex tenebat totam* Angliam *ad Coronam*; and yet I cannot affirm that *Fife* was ever a Palatinate; But ſure the Priviledges of this Regality and Sanctuary were ſomewhat more then ordinary. And this our *Mackduffs* poſterity continued in a line male till the dayes of King *David* the *Bruce*: for one of them I find Governour of *Perth* for the ſecond *Baliol*, after the Battel of *Duplin*, for which, whether he was forfaulted, or that his Eſtate and Honours, through want of iſſue-male, went with a Daughter, *I* cannot poſitively averr: For, one *William* Earl of *Fife I* find a witneſs in a Charter, granted by King *David* 2d, to the *Scrimzeour* of *Didupe*, in the 29. year of his Reign, whom *I* conceive to be that *William Ramſay* ſaid by *Skeen* to have been made Earl of *Fife* by King *David*, with all Priviledges, *& cum Lege quæ vocatur Clanmackduff*, who might have married a Daughter of Earl *Duncans*, as well becauſe he got all the old Priviledges confirmed to him, as that in the *Scrimzeours* Charter, he is placed before the Earle of *March*; *It* not being ſo probable that the King would have given the priviledges, and precedencie of the old Earles of *Fyfe* to a new Stranger, if he had not had an intereſt of bloud. And why ſhould we too raſhly conclude that noble Familie, whoſe predeceſſors had deſerved ſo well of the Crown, extinct upon a forefaultour for holding the Town of *Perth* for the ſecond *Baliol*: Since our Hiſtorian ſayes no more, But that he was ſent Priſoner to the Caſtle of *Kildrummie*, and that he makes him alſo a priſoner to the *Baliol*, with the Earles of *Murray*, *Monteth*, and others; who, as he ſayes, after the battel of *Duplin*, were *Rebus deſperatis coacti jurare in verba Balioli.*

Neither were the *Bruce's* too ſtrick and ſevere in their forefaultours, (but upon great and ſingular provocations) ſtudying rather to gain

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and reconcile the Subject by Indemnities, and Oblivions, then to exasperate them by too sharp punishments (especially when the *Baliols* had some pretence and shadow of Right) But what became of this *William Ramsay*, *I* cannot say; whether he was forefaulted, or whether through want of issue, the Earledom of *Fyfe* returned to the Crown, or whether he had a daughter who was married to *Robert* the Governour, who enjoyed the Estate and Honours of *Fyfe*: But if as full in its priviledges as the old *Mackduffs*, or *William Ramsay*, *I* dare not determine. But *Skeen* does positively tell us, that one *Spence* of *Wormeston* laid claim to, and enjoyed the priviledge of the Sanctuarie, upon his killing of one *Kinninmonth*, as being within the degrees of kindred to *Mackduffe*.

The Earle of *Weems*, and the Laird of *Mackintosh* speak themselves truely descended in a line Male from this our *Mackduffe*, by two of his sons; But since I have seen nothing in write, as *I* shall be tender of their honour, not doubting but that they are sufficiently able from good documents, to evince their assertions to any who may be concerned; So *I* hope, it shall give no offence, though *I* glance at what I have from Tradition. *Mackintosh* then be he the elder or the younger brother) in his Mother Tongue calls himself to this very day, Maktosich Uichdhuie, (that is, *Filius Thani filii Duffi*: the son of the *Thane*, who was the son of *Duffe*) whose Predecessor some three or four generations down from *Mackduffe*, was in the days of K. *William* the *Lyon*, by means of his Uncle *Mackdonald* of the Isles, matched to the Heretrix of the *Clanchattan*, by whom he got the Lordship of *Lochaber*: the Jurisdiction or Stewartrie whereof, as the Laird of *Mackintosh* yet retains, so quarters he the coat of *Mackduffe* in the chief corner of his shield. The Earl of *Weems* (be he from the younger brother or elder) yet possesses for his Inheritance, a part of the old *Mackduff's* Estate in *Fyfe*: And whose Progenitor, Sir *David Weems*, Ambassador for the *Maiden* of *Norway* upon the death of K. *Alexander* the third, is by *Buchanan* (nothing lavish of his Titles) styled, *Equus Fifanus illustris*. And doth not the Earle of *Weems* quarter also the Armes of the Earle of *Fyfe*, in his first and last Escutcheons.

But as upon conference, I have met with an objection or two, so in-

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dulge me, Reader, I pray, for your fuller satisfaction, briefly here to repeat them with my answers: which (seing I leave every man to his own judgement) may I hope, be neither an impertinent, nor altogether an unpleasant diversion.

First then, Was it alledged, That neither *Mackintosh*, nor *Weems*, give the Surname of *Mackduffe*: And what then? Will any pretender to the least knowledge of any Antiquity, or Reading, urge the arguement as conclusive, That therefore they are not of the same Stock, or Bloud; yea, even by a line Male But (not here to debate, whether at that time any other Surnames, then *Patronymicks*, were fixed to a Family or Progeny) Can there be a clearer deduction, then *Duffe*, *Mackduffe* (who was the *Thane*) and *Macktosich-Vichdhnie*, or would the movers of this objection, put me upon the question, when surnames (as now in use) first setled amongst us? And what if that was not before, perhaps considerably after, the days of *Macolm-Canmore* (I wish those Disputants would be pleased to teach me, what were the surnames of the old Earles of *Strabherne*, *Lennox*, and *Rosse*) Yea, and does not the native exposition of *Mackintosh*, imply him begot en (and perchance he was of age too) ere *Mackduffe* was dignified with the tittle of *Earle*, and consequently, before the return of *Malcolm Canmore*, with whom (some say) first came in as well that order of Honour, as the customes of our surnames. And seing *Weems* was *Mackintosh*'s Brother, might not he have been (and if elder surely, and even though the younger belike) in the same condition, begot before his father went to *England*, seing *Buchanan* sayes of *Mackbeth*, that upon *Mackduff's* escape, *in uxorem & liberos omnem iram effudit*: The latitude whereof I leave to be measured by such, who can best fathom the passions of an exasperated Tyrant. But what if I should say, as *Boetius* observeth upon the *Stuarts* in a much later time, that it was customary with us (as yet somewhat it is with the second sons of Barons in *France*) for Cadets to quit the surnames, they might have from their Paternal Familie, and betake themselves and their posteritie to others, and most ordinarily to the names of their proper possessions (as *Weems* here, from that word signifying *Cavrs*, whereof there be no scarcity thereabout) and so much the more

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easily in this case, where the Paternal it self *Mackduffe*, is but a Patronymick. Yet shall I not escape without a second Attacque, managed with I know not what confidence: To wit, That *Mackduffes* race, save in *Mackintosh* and *Weems*, continued not above a generation or two: Sure then, has our *Buchanan* exceedingly abus'd us; who all alongst, even down to the battel of *Duplin*, and the siege of *Perth* thereupon, writes them still *Mackduff*; his words in his ninth book, being, *Mackduffus, Fifæ Comes qui oppidum Balioli nomine tenuerat*, and a little before that above-cited place, yet more particularly, *Duncanus Mackduffus, Fifensis Comes* (with others) *apud Hostem captivus*. And as all our Writers do unanimously rank this *Duncan*, the first Secular of the six Governours, after the death of K. *Alexander* the third, so have I my self read him, in a letter from the Parliament at *Abirbrothock* to the Pope, *anno* 1320. First of all named, and signing as Earle *Primier* of the Kingdom, where his seal yet appends fresh, four times bigger then any of the rest, with the Impresse as they Record the Armes in the books of Herauldrie for the old Earles of *Fyfe*, and as yet they are quartered by *Mackintosh* and *Weems*. But thirdly, it is retorted upon me, that if the Earle of *Weems*, and Laird of *Mackintosh*, had been true Cadets in a line Male, then if the *Mackduff* of *Fyfe* had not been forefaulted, one or other of them would undoubtedly, as the neareſt Heir Male, have faln to, and enjoy'd, if not the Estate, at least the Honours of *Fyfe*. But the starters of this doubt, would be pleased to remember the slipperiness of its grounds; For are not Feudal Tailzies, and secluſive Provisions to Heirs Male, of a far later date with us: And so might that Earledom as well in its Honours, as Fortune, have gone with a daughter (as heir of line) to *William Ramsay*, and by a grand-child to *Robert Stuart*: Yea, and who well knows in what terms our grants of honour, (if then in *Malcom Canmor's* dayes consigned to writ) were conceived, or if they reached Collaterals? And the Predeceſſors of the Earle of *Weems* and Laird of *Mackintosh*, having come off many generations before the Familie failed in the issue Male, the Honours might (the relation being remote) the more readily have been conveyed by a new Patent, with a Daughter or Oye in favours of some noble Minion, such

as

(belike was this *William Sam*[illegible], and) that *Robert Stuart* the King's second son, who was sometimes Governour of *Scotland*, and Duke of *Albanie*, in the person of whose Son, Duke *Murdoch*, was that Earldom forefaulted to the Crown, in the days of K. *James* the first, and not as yet given out again, none ever since injoying the Title and Dignity of Earle of *Fyfe*.

But having thus far presumed upon, if not quite wearied your patience, in this so thornie and mistie affair; I must now, Courteous Reader, stand to the discretion of your Censure, where I shall allow you, That

Rebus in priscis, ad unguem haud est quarenda veritas.

If on the other hand you will be pleased to grant me,

Fidum annalium genus, sunt pervetusta carmina.

And suffer me to conclude with what *Skeen* closeth the Preface to his *De verborum significatione*,

Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperti: si non, his utere mecum.

FINIS.

THat, Gentle Reader, I may conceale you nothing; Just now, as it was a doing under the Irons, am I told there is an exact Coppie, with a true exposition of this Inscription at the *Newburgh*, in the hands, or books of the Clerk there: And yet my Informer, though with us a good Antiquarie and Historian, could neither tell me the lines, nor the exposition. And pitie it were that so old and famous a Monument in this our Kingdom, should be so [illegible] dormant, in a poor Countrey-village, without being communicate (for ought I know) to any: For it should seem, our Clerk-register *Skeen*, had neither seen nor heard of it, otherwayes (me thinks) he would hardly have called the lines so barbarous. But this, however, I hope may invite those of the *Newburgh* to divulge it, (if any such thing they have) for it is onely truth, (not vanity) that here I am in quest of. And as this my weak Essay, I have adventured upon, without the help of any living. So crave I no it other Patron, but, Courteous Reader, your own Candour and Ingenuity.